

FAQ Buildings

Q: What is exempt from a building permit?

A: The various building, mechanical and plumbing codes and ordinances adopted by the City of Ellensburg define certain activities and/or structures that are exempt from building permit requirements. While an activity may be exempt from building, mechanical and/or plumbing permit requirements there may be other local, federal and state permitting requirements. For example, the following still apply: Critical Areas protection, setbacks requirements, lot coverage requirements, parking, etc. Therefore, please contact the Community Development Department prior to initiating any work to ensure that you are complying with all applicable codes, regulations and ordinances.

For more information, view [Building Permit Exemptions Bulletin BB-11](#)

Q: Do I need a permit to replace windows, siding or roofing?

A: Yes, a permit is required.

A building permit is required to install a new roof, install new windows and replace siding on any commercial, multi-family, public and/or residential single family house or storage shed. However, if the building is [exempt](#) from permit requirements to construct, then a permit is not required for re-roof, window replacement and/or siding replacement.

Q: How do I schedule an inspection?

A: There are **two ways** to schedule Building and/or Land Use Permit inspections in the City of Ellensburg:

1- Telephone Inspection Request Line

Call the Inspection Request Line at (509) 962-7142. Inspections can be requested up to 8:00 am the day of the requested inspection. The inspection request line is cleared at 8:00 am. If requests are made after 8:00 a.m then they will occur on the next business day, unless a different day is requested.

2- SMARTGov On-Line Permit Center

Inspections can be scheduled by using the City of Ellensburg's online SMARTGov web-based permitting software program. The SMARTGov website allows permit customers to view detailed permit information, **schedule inspections** and review the approval process of their permit application.

Inspections can be scheduled up to 12:00 midnight for a next day inspection. Inspections scheduled after 12:00 midnight, using the SMARTGov On-Line Permit Center, will be automatically scheduled by the computer system for the next

business day. (See above for the cutoff time for inspections scheduled through the telephone)

Q: Can I convert my garage or basement into a bedroom?

A: An unfinished basement or, a portion of a finished basement, in a single family residence, may be able to be converted into a bedroom or other type of habitable living area. However, a permit is required for this type of construction work prior to any work commencing and a thorough plan review and inspections are required to ensure all code requirements are met. Please contact the Community Development Department to determine if the work can be permitted and to obtain the permitting requirements prior to commencing work.

A garage may be allowed to be converted to a bedroom or habitable living space but there are more code requirements than a basement conversion. A permit is required for a garage conversion prior to commencing any work and a thorough plan review and inspections are required to ensure all code requirements are met. Please contact the Community Development Department to determine if the work can be permitted and to obtain the permitting requirements prior to commencing work.

Q: What plans are required to submit for a permit?

A: Visit: <https://ci.ellensburg.wa.us/index.aspx?nid=502> to view by permit type what is required to submit a permit.

Q: What is required for a "site-plan?"

A: The site plan or plot plan is a graphical presentation of an entire lot as seen from an aerial view. This site plan will be used by City of Ellensburg Community Development Department, Public Works Department and Energy Services Department to check many things that are critical for the issuance of a building permit, including: setbacks, easements, driveway and parking lot, utility locations, lot coverage, street frontage improvements and critical areas. Three (3) copies of the site plan are required for residential building permit applications and five (5) copies for Commercial or Multi-Family building permit applications. (See the example drawing and for more information view the [Site Plan Requirements Bulletin BB-10](#))

Q: How long does it take to get a building permit?

A: Over the counter Mechanical and Plumbing Permits

Most mechanical and plumbing permits for work such as replacing or adding a furnace, air conditioner, water heater, toilet, shower, etc. can be issued over the counter and take approximately 30 minutes.

Windows, Doors, Siding and Re-Roof

Most of these types of permits can be issued the same day over the counter. However, if the project is located in a critical area or structural changes or repair are needed, then the permit cannot be issued the same day over the counter.

New Single Family Residence, Garage, Shop

A permit for a new house, garage or shop takes approximately 5-6 weeks to review and issue. All new construction permits must be routed to Public Works, Energy Services, Planning and the Fire Marshal for review and approval.

Commercial, Multi-Family and Public

There is no definitive time that can be established for review and approval for either new commercial, multi-family or public buildings. These types of structures usually require much more time for review due to the complexity of the structure and the site infrastructure. A Pre-Application meeting is required for these structures and staff may be able to provide an approximate review time at this meeting.

Commercial Tenant Improvement

Simple tenant improvement permits, that only involve interior work, can usually be issued in 1 week. However, if water, electrical or gas meters will be modified or location change the permit may take longer to issue. Tenant improvement permits that involve additions and/or exterior work will require more review time and no definitive review time can be provided, each project will require the time necessary for a complete review.